



Educational Support Service - Dr. Paul Fregeau, Executive Director - 816.413.5041

November 3, 2008

Re: Request for Reconsideration of Materials

Dear

Please accept this letter as the formal notification of the result of your request for reconsideration regarding Pretties and Specials. Per board policy, KLB-AP, a committee met on November 3, 2008 for the purpose of reviewing a request for reconsideration of materials.

The committee convened and deliberated the educational merit and age appropriateness of the books, Pretties and Specials by Scott Westerfield.

The committee considered the following options:

- Retained without restriction.
- Retained with restriction.
- Not retained.

Committee members reviewed the district "Instructional Materials" policy. Members concentrated on "judging the material as a whole, taking into account the purpose of the material rather than individual and isolated expressions or incidents of the work." Reviews were obtained from multiple sources.

The Reconsideration Committee reached consensus to "**retain without restriction**" based upon the above information. Parents do have the option to restrict books being checked out by their child.

Please understand the committee has reviewed your request thoroughly and I hope you can appreciate the position it took in regards to this request. If you would like to appeal this decision you would need to submit a letter within five business days to:

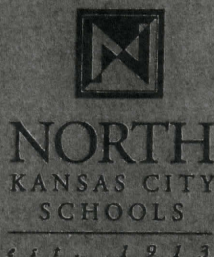
The Superintendent of Schools
North Kansas City Schools
2000 N.E. 46th Street
Kansas City, MO 64116

Thank you for following the proper process and making us aware of your concerns. If you have any questions, please call me at (816) 413-5041.

Sincerely,

Paul Fregeau, Ed.D.
Executive Director
Educational Support Services

Pc: Dr. Thomas Cummings, Superintendent of Schools
Dr. Todd White, Deputy Superintendent
Ms. Jill Smith, Library Media Coordinator



Jill's Copy

**Request for Reconsideration of Materials Meeting
November 3, 2008
Admin Training Room, CO**

Review Committee

- ✓ Dr. Paul Fregeau, Executive Director Educational Support Services
- ✓ Jill Smith, District Library Media Coordinator
- ✓ Laura Whitaker, Media Specialist, Maple Park Middle School
- ✓ Trisha Guffey, Assistant Principal, Maple Park Middle School
- ✓ Aimee Portie, Communication Arts Teacher, New Mark Middle School
- Debbie Parnacott, Parent, PTA Council Representative
- ✓ Kate Sargent, Family Resource Specialist

Welcome and Introductions

Decision-Making Process

Review Policy, Procedures, Objectives for the Selection of Library Materials

**Review Request for Reconsideration of Materials for:
Uglies by Scott Westerfield
Pretties by Scott Westerfield**

Discuss Checklist for Reconsideration of Materials

Discuss Additional Information

Committee Recommendation

- Retained without restriction
- Retained with restriction
- Not retained

Conclusion

Master Copy

**CHECKLIST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS
FICTION & OTHER LITERARY FORMS**

Title *Uglies, Pretties*
Author *Scott Westerfeld*
Format *print book*

Purpose

1. What is the overall purpose, theme, or message of the material? *vanity, being different, acceptance, choices, loyalty, consequences*
2. Is the purpose accomplished? ☒ Yes ☐ No
3. If the story is fantasy, is it the type that has imaginative appeal? ☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ NA
Suitable for: children *Young adults*
If both were marked no, for what age group would you recommend? _____
4. Will reading, viewing and/or listening to the material result in a greater understanding of human beings? ☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ NA
5. Does it offer an opportunity to better understand and appreciate the aspirations, achievements, and problems of various minority groups? ☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ NA
6. Are any questionable elements of the story an integral part of a worthwhile theme or message?
☐ Yes ☒ No ☐ NA

Content

1. Does the material give a realistic picture of life as it is now? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☒ NA
2. Does the story avoid an oversimplified view of life? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☒ NA
3. When factual information is part of the story, is it presented accurately?
☐ Yes ☐ No ☒ NA
4. Are concepts presented appropriate to the ability and maturity of the potential reader/viewer/listener? ☒ Yes ☐ No
5. Do characters speak in a language true to the period and section of the country in which they live? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☒ NA
6. Does the material offend in some special way the sensibilities of women or a minority group by the way it presents either the chief character or any of the minor characters? ☐ Yes ☒ No
7. Are there excessive instances with sex, violence, cruelty, brutality, and/or aberrant behavior that would make this material inappropriate? ☐ Yes ☒ No ☐ NA *germane to story*
Suitable for: Children *Young adults*
8. Is the language appropriate to the purpose of the material? ☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ NA
9. Does the material give a broader understanding of human behavior without stressing differences of class, race, color, sex, education, religion, or philosophy in any way? ☒ Yes ☐ No

*psychologically sound
resolved & consequences of cutting,*

brief excerpts of cutting

**CHECKLIST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS
FICTION & OTHER LITERARY FORMS**

10. Does the material make a significant contribution to the history of literature or ideas?

____ Yes ____ No ☒ NA

11. Are the illustrations realistic in relation to the story? ____ Yes ____ No ☒ NA

12. Are the illustrations appropriate and in good taste? ____ Yes ____ No ☒ NA

13. Is the material well written or produced? ☒ Yes ____ No

Reviews

1. Review sources: see attached

Favorably reviewed _____ Unfavorably reviewed _____

2. Does this title appear on award lists? ____ Yes ____ No

If so, which lists? _____

Additional comments

Recommendation by Review Committee:

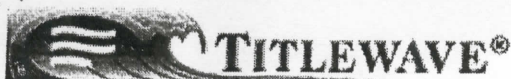
- ☒ Retain without restriction
☐ Retain with restriction
☐ Do not retain

Date Nov. 3, 2008

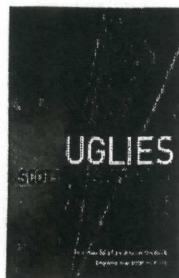
Signature of Review Committee Members

Jessie Gully Asst. Prin. MPHS
Auna Whitaker
James Portie
Kathryn K. Sargent

Gerald P. MacArthur

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Uglies

Take a
CLOSER LOOK**Uglies** (#31969W0)
by Westerfeld, Scott.
 FollettBound Glued
1st Simon Pulse ed.
425 p. ; 18 cm.
\$12.86

Title Details

Title: Uglies / Scott Westerfeld.**Publisher:** Simon Pulse, p2005, c2005**ISBN-13:** 978-0-689-86538-1**LCCN:** 2004106866**ISBN-10:** 0-689-86538-4**Dewey:** -Fic-**Classifications:** Fiction**Interest Level:** YA**Subjects:** Beauty, Personal Fiction.
Science fiction.

Notes: Tally is faced with a difficult choice when her new friend Shay decides to risk life on the outside rather than submit to the forced operation that turns sixteen year old girls into gorgeous beauties, and realizes that there is a whole new side to the pretty world that she doesn't like.

Accelerated Reader

ATOS Reading Level: 5.2**Point Value:** 13**Interest Level:** MG**Quiz:** 86097EN

Reading Counts

Reading Level: 5.6**Point Value:** 19

Lexile

Lexile Number: 770

Reviews & Awards

Wilson's Senior High School

Wilson's Junior High School

10/01/07

11/01/05

School Library Journal starred

Booklist starred 03/15/05

03/01/05

Kirkus Review starred 02/15/05

Bulletin of the Center for Children's

Books 02/01/05

Voice of Youth Advocates

Teacher Librarian 10/01/05

(V.O.Y.A.) 06/01/05

Full-Text Reviews

Booklist starred (March 15, 2005 (Vol. 101, No. 14))

Gr. 7-10. Fifteen-year-old Tally's eerily harmonious, postapocalyptic society gives extreme makeovers to teens on their sixteenth birthdays, supposedly conferring equivalent evolutionary advantages to all. When a top-secret agency threatens to leave Tally ugly forever unless she spies on runaway teens, she agrees to infiltrate the Smoke, a shadowy colony of refugees from the "tyranny of physical perfection." At first baffled and revolted by the rebels' choices, Tally eventually bonds with one of their leaders and begins to question the validity of institutionalized mutilation--especially as it becomes clear that the government's surgeons may be doing more than cosmetic nipping and tucking.

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▼ Full-Text Reviews

Although the narrative's brisk pace is more successful in scenes of hoverboarding action than in convincingly developing Tally's key relationships, teens will sink their teeth into the provocative questions about invasive technology, image-obsessed society, and the ethical quandaries of a mole-turned-ally. These elements, along with the obvious connections to reality programs such as *Miami Slice*, will surely cause this ingenious series debut to cement Westerfeld's reputation for high-concept YA fiction that has wide appeal. Suggest M. T. Anderson's *Feed* (2002) and Westerfeld's own *So Yesterday* (2004) to readers antsy for the next installment.

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Kirkus Review starred (February 15, 2005)

With a beginning and ending that pack hefty punches, this introduction to a dystopic future promises an exciting series. Tally is almost 16 and breathlessly eager: On her birthday, like everyone else, she'll undergo extensive surgery to become a Pretty. She's only known life as an Ugly (everyone's considered hideous before surgery), whereas after she "turns," she'll have the huge eyes, perfect skin, and new bone structure that biology and evolution have determined to be objectively beautiful. New Pretties party all day long. But when friend Shay escapes to join a possibly mythical band of outsiders avoiding surgery, Tally follows—not from choice but because the secret police force her. Tally inflicts betrayal after betrayal, which dominates the theme for the midsection; by the end, the nature of this dystopia is front and center and Tally-trying to set things right-takes a stunning leap of faith. Some heavy-handedness, but the awesome ending thrills with potential. (Science fiction. YA)

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Publishers Weekly (March 21, 2005)

In this launch title of a planned trilogy, teenager Tally Youngblood is living an unexamined life in a world unlike ours, hundreds of years from now. She's impatiently awaiting her birthday because in her town, Uglyville, everybody gets the same gift at age 16: cosmetic surgery which transforms them into gorgeous creatures. They also move into "party towers" in New Pretty Town. Tally's best friend has already made the transition and, motivated by her desire to see him, she sneaks into town. Her near-capture leads to a new best friend, Shay, who has the same birthday. On the eve of their operations, Shay reveals a plan to escape to a renegade settlement called "the Smoke." When Shay disappears, government agents blackmail Tally into leading them to the rebels. Once in the Smoke, Tally has a crisis of conscience when she learns the surgery is more sinister than she imagined. Teens will appreciate the gadgetry—including bungee jackets and hoverboards that work by magnetic levitation. But plausibility problems creep in, such as Tally leading a breakout of Smokeys from a high-tech compound while wearing handcuffs. As in his *So Yesterday*, Westerfeld introduces thought-provoking issues, but readers may lose track of the plot while sorting the many messages about how the "Rusties" nearly destroyed the planet. They may also feel cheated when, after 400-plus pages, the ending leaves loose ends to be tied up in the next installment, *Pretties*. Ages 12-up. (Mar.) Copyright 2005 Reed Business Information.

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School Library Journal (March 1, 2005)

Gr 6 Up—Tally Youngblood lives in a futuristic society that acculturates its citizens to believe that they are ugly until age 16 when they'll undergo an operation that will change them into pleasure-seeking "pretties." Anticipating this happy transformation, Tally meets Shay, another female ugly, who shares her enjoyment of hoverboarding and risky pranks. But Shay also disdains the false values and programmed conformity of the society and urges Tally to defect with her to the Smoke, a distant settlement of simple-living conscientious objectors. Tally declines, yet when Shay is found missing by the authorities, Tally is coerced by the cruel Dr. Cable to find her and her compatriots—or remain forever "ugly." Tally's adventuresome spirit helps her locate Shay and the Smoke. It also attracts the eye of David, the aptly named youthful rebel leader to whose attentions Tally warms. However, she knows she is living a lie, for she is a spy who wears an eye-activated locator pendant that threatens to blow the rebels' cover. Ethical concerns will provide a good source of discussion as honesty, justice, and free will are all oppressed in this well-conceived dystopia. Characterization, which flirts so openly with the importance of teen self-concept, is strong, and although lengthy, the novel is highly readable with a convincing plot that incorporates futuristic technologies and a disturbing commentary on our current public policies. Fortunately, the

cliff-hanger ending promises a sequel.-Susan W. Hunter, Riverside Middle School, Springfield, VT Copyright 2005 Reed Business Information.

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Pretties

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Take a
CLOSER LOOK
Pretties (#36979V1)
 by Westerfeld, Scott.

 FollettBound Glued
 1st Simon Pulse ed.
 370 p. ; 18 cm.
\$12.86

Title Details

Title: Pretties / Scott Westerfeld.**Publisher:** Simon Pulse, p2005, c2005**ISBN-13:** 978-0-689-86539-8**LCCN:** 2004118120**ISBN-10:** 0-689-86539-2**Dewey:** -Fic-**Classifications:** Fiction**Interest Level:** YA**Subjects:** Beauty, Personal Fiction.

Science fiction.

Surgery, Plastic Fiction.

Notes: Tally's perfect life as a Pretty is disrupted when she receives a letter from herself, written when she was an Ugly, reminding her of the promise she made to take a drug developed to cure the brain lesions that keep the Pretties shallow and happy--and when she takes the pills, she becomes a target of those determined to keep Pretty society carefree.

Accelerated Reader

ATOS Reading Level: 5.7**Point Value:** 13**Interest Level:** MG**Quiz:** 102674EN

Reading Counts

Reading Level: 5.4**Point Value:** 20

Lexile

Lexile Number: 860

Reviews & Awards

Wilson's Senior High School

Wilson's Junior High School

11/01/06

08/21/06

School Library Journal 12/01/05

Horn Book starred 04/01/06

Booklist 09/15/05

Bulletin of the Center for Children's

Books 12/01/05

Voice of Youth Advocates

Kirkus Review 10/15/05

(V.O.Y.A.) 10/01/05

Full-Text Reviews

Booklist (September 15, 2005 (Vol. 102, No. 2))

Gr. 8-11. In this highly anticipated sequel to the hit *Uglies* 2005), Tally Youngblood struggles to retain her mental acuity after undergoing the operation that transformed her into a Pretty. While in the renegade Ugly community, Tally learned that along with cosmetic enhancements, new Pretties are given brain lesions that leave them in a perpetual state of lazy vanity. Tally volunteered to take a drug developed to cure the lesions, but now that she is a Pretty, she has forgotten her promise. A coded message leads her to some pills and a letter that she wrote to herself before her transformation,

and after swallowing the cure, she is catapulted into a dangerous new adventure, in which she discovers that the peace and happiness of Pretty society come with a terrible price. Riveting and compulsively readable, this action-packed sequel does not disappoint. Just as good as its predecessor, it will leave fans breathlessly waiting for the trilogy's final volume.

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Horn Book (November/December, 2005)

The second in a projected trilogy, this futuristic novel looks at what happens to a society when it structures itself to be beautiful, safe, and focused exclusively on entertainment. At the end of the first book, Uglies, rebellious teen Tally Youngblood agreed to be the guinea pig for a subversive procedure meant to undo the brain lesions intentionally inflicted on every teen as they become "pretty" at age sixteen. But now Tally, with her breathtaking face and super athleticism, is consumed with the life of a "New Pretty" -- all parties and trying to be "bubbly." When given a letter she wrote herself pre-Pretty, she realizes how shallow her life has become, so she takes the experimental pills, splitting them with her friend Zane. This second installment suffers from some typical middle-book problems and doesn't really stand alone. Still, the world Westerfeld creates is both appealing and appalling; the pace moves quickly with twists; and Tally is a memorable, believable character -- admirably self-sufficient and plucky without being insufferably so.

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Horn Book starred (Spring 2006)

This futuristic novel looks at what happens to a society when it structures itself to be beautiful, safe, and focused exclusively on entertainment. This second installment in the projected trilogy doesn't really stand alone. Still, Westerfeld's world is both appealing and appalling; the pace moves quickly with twists; and rebellious teen Tally is a memorable, believable character.

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Kirkus Review (October 15, 2005)

This bracing second entry follows straight from Tally's stunning choice at the end of Uglies (Feb. 2005). Now mesmerizingly pretty from the high-tech surgery that everyone in this dystopian future receives at age 16, Tally and her friends have no obligations beyond partying. Being pretty includes being pretty-minded: "empty and lazy and vapid," pleasure-focused, with everything seeming "vague and fuzzy." A group of rebels outside the city may have a cure; Tally had volunteered (pre-surgery) to be the test case, but will her newly pretty brain agree with her old self? She and her boyfriend engineer a hot-air balloon escape, during which Tally gets separated from him and ends up in the woods, discovering ancient-type people kept alive in an alarming experiment. When she finally reaches the rebels, things go instantly wrong in a continuation of this series' powerful theme of manipulation and betrayal. Exciting plot with intriguing technology-part three is eagerly awaited. (Science fiction. YA)

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Publishers Weekly (October 17, 2005)

Tally, the star of Uglies by Scott Westerfeld (which PW said, "raises thought-provoking issues") is now one of the Pretties, thanks to an operation that everyone from Uglyville gets when they turn 16, and which makes them gorgeous. In this sequel, a letter Tally discovers from her "former" self raises disturbing questions about what else may have occurred during the procedure. Copyright 2005 Reed Business Information.

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School Library Journal (December 1, 2005)

Gr 9 Up-This sequel to Uglies (S & S, 2005) continues to provide a gripping look at a dystopian future, but does not stand on its own. Tally, the protagonist of the first book, has forgotten all that she did as an Ugly and has completely embraced the mindless life of a New Pretty, going to parties, drinking heavily, and thinking of nothing more than the next bit of entertainment. It is not until one of the Uglies from New Smoke comes and delivers a message for her that leads her to two pills, that she begins to remember the real reason she is Pretty: to see if the cure will work. Tally and her new boyfriend, Zane, each take one of the pills and both begin to stay focused for longer periods of time. Then he has a bad reaction to the pill, and Tally has to make a desperate attempt to get him to the only doctors who can help him-the ones outside the city. Westerfeld has built a masterfully complex and vivid civilization. His characters are

multidimensional, especially Tally, who wrestles with what she has done in the past and what she will be forced to do in the future. Uglies and Pretties are both nearly impossible to put down. If you don't have the first one, make sure to purchase them both.-Tasha Saecker, Caestecker Public Library, Green Lake, WI Copyright 2005 Reed Business Information.

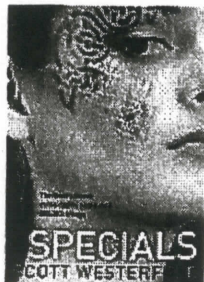
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Specials

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CLOSER LOOK**Specials** (#24963S4)
by Westerfeld, Scott.
 Publisher's Hardcover
1st Simon Pulse ed.
372 p. ; 19 cm.
\$13.56

Title Details

Title: Specials / Scott Westerfeld.**Publisher:** Simon Pulse, p2006, c2006**ISBN-13:** 978-0-689-86540-4**LCCN:** 2005933890**ISBN-10:** 0-689-86540-6**Dewey:** -Fic-**Classifications:** Fiction**Interest Level:** YA**Included in These Sets/Series:** Young Adult's Choices 2008**Subjects:** Beauty, Personal Fiction.

Science fiction.

Insurgency Fiction.

Notes: Tally has been turned into a Special and is offered a chance to stamp out the rebels of the New Smoke permanently.

Accelerated Reader

ATOS Reading Level: 6.1**Point Value:** 12**Interest Level:** MG**Quiz:** 106651EN

Reading Counts

Reading Level: 5.6**Point Value:** 19

Lexile

Lexile Number: 880

Reviews & Awards

Wilson's Senior High School

Wilson's Junior High School

11/01/06

08/01/07

School Library Journal 07/01/06

Horn Book starred 04/01/07

Kirkus Review starred 05/01/06

Booklist 05/15/06

Horn Book 04/01/07

Voice of Youth Advocates

(V.O.Y.A.) 06/01/06

Full-Text Reviews

Horn Book (September/October, 2006)

In the final volume of the trilogy that began with *Uglies*, Tally Youngblood has now gone beyond being a "pretty" and is now a "special," one of an elite force with a gorgeous but lethal physique and superhuman athletic ability. The goal of a pretty was to be "bubbly," but now Tally's goal is to stay "icy" -- not easy once she and her friend Shay accidentally destroy a weapons armory, leading to war with a neighboring city. As the gripping plot progresses, Tally struggles with the underlying question of her identity; she also realizes that the issues that initially seemed very clearly divided between good and evil are far more nuanced than she had thought, that power needs resistance in order to keep it from becoming corrupted. Westerfeld's writing is never subtle, but he lets readers get beneath Tally's beautiful skin and brings the trilogy to a

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humane conclusion with a surprising twist.

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Horn Book starred (Spring 2007)

Tally Youngblood is a "special," one of an elite force with a gorgeous but lethal physique and superhuman athletic ability. In a gripping plot, she and her friend, Shay, accidentally destroy a weapons armory, which leads to war with a neighboring city. Westerfeld's writing isn't subtle, but he brings the trilogy (*Uglies*, *Pretties*) to a humane conclusion with a surprising twist.

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Kirkus Review starred (May 1, 2006)

Tally's third incarnation is thrillingly unsettling. When readers left her, she was about to be surgically altered from a "Pretty" to a carefully engineered military "Special." Now her body is weaponized; her teeth, fingernails and reflexes razor-sharp. Westerfeld deftly conveys Tally's new perspective: Edges look extra sharp, the world is maniacally beautiful and Dr. Cable's pursuit of the New Smoke rebels is inherently justified, especially because the New Smoke's irresponsible medical experimentation damaged Tally's boyfriend Zane and made him repulsive. Tally and Shay are Cutters, elite Specials who slice their skin to stay hyper-focused. As they track runaways to find the New Smoke, the previously two-sided fight expands into a war with multiple stances and complications; on a far broader scale than Tally could have guessed. Tally's in constant motion, the action nonstop, all the way until-parallelizing the stunning end of *Uglies*-Tally makes an unromantic, pragmatic and desperate final decision. A splendid, provocative conclusion to a terrific series. (Science fiction. YA)

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Publishers Weekly (June 26, 2006)

Bringing the *Uglies* trilogy to a close, *Specials* by Scott Westerfeld follows Tally Youngblood, first met in *Uglies* (which PW said "introduces thought-provoking issues"), as she is turned into a Special, a high-octane fighting machine, programmed to keep the uglies down and the pretties stupid. Can she listen to the small voice in her head or will she destroy New Smoke's residents? Copyright 2006 Reed Business Information.

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Publishers Weekly (August 27, 2007)

This installment of the *Uglies* series finds 16-year-old Tally fully programmed to be an elite governmental fighting machine. But when she is ordered to destroy a New Smoke rebel settlement, Tally is caught between a remnant of her humanity and her mission as a Special. Ages 12-up. (Sept.) Copyright 2007 Reed Business Information.

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School Library Journal (July 1, 2006)

Gr 8 Up-This final installment in the series is a warning of the dangers of overconsumption and conformity. Set some time in the future, after a human-made bacteria destroyed the modern world, the trilogy tells of new cities established and tightly controlled through brainwashing and a series of operations leading to a compliant society. Tally Youngblood, the 16-year-old protagonist, learns in the first two books that free will and truth are more important than a false sense of security. In *Specials*, she has become an elite fighting machine, fully enhanced with nanotechnology and super-fast reflexes, and made to work as a Special Circumstances agent for the nameless city that she fled. As in the first two books, much of the story takes place with characters whizzing through the air on hoverboards, but Tally and her friends are in for some harsh realities here. Readers who enjoyed *Uglies* and *Pretties* (both S & S, 2005) will not want to miss *Specials*, but those who have not read those books will not understand much of what is happening. Westerfeld's themes include vanity, environmental conservation, Utopian idealism, fascism, violence, and love. In this trilogy, the author calls for a revolution in our hearts and minds-think *The Matrix*.-Corinda J. Humphrey, Los Angeles Public Library Copyright 2006 Reed Business Information.

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REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF MATERIALS

Author: SCOTT WESTERFELD

Format: BOOK, HARD BACK

Title: PRETTIES AND SPECIALS

Publisher (if known): _____

Request Initiated By: _____

Telephone: _____ Address: _____

City: GLADSTONE MO Zip: 64119

1. Did you read or view the entire book or material? ☒ Yes ☐ No
If not, what parts did you read or view? Please be specific.

2. What are your specific objections to the educational use of this material?

SEE ATTACHMENT, PLEASE

3. What would you like your library/school to do about this work?

☒ Do not assign/lend it to my child: _____

☒ Return it to the staff selection comm _____

☐ Other, please explain: _____

Signature: C _____ Date: 10.9.08

Note: The reader is encouraged to review policies and/or procedures for related information in this administrative area.

Attachment
Request for Reconsideration
Elizabeth Russell List
October 8, 2008

#2. What are your specific objections to the educational use of this material?

I object to the use of the books *Pretties* and *Specials* in an elementary or middle school setting. The books contain ample references to teenagers cutting themselves. Both books, particularly *Specials*, include descriptive passages of teenagers forming a group that cuts itself to think more clearly (the Cutters). Members of the Cutters cut their arms with knives (although teeth are used on one occasion) when alone and as part of a group ritual. Group members believe that cutting is a "cure" to the state of mind induced by the operation performed on them when each was sixteen and became a frivolous minded "Pretty". The books' cutting mentions would make any parent of a minor flinch.

I am afraid of the influence of these books on my children and other children, as well. The books portray the Cutters as a group that eventually becomes a privileged gang within the already powerful "Specials", superhuman types with surgically enhanced powers. I find it disturbing that the narrators' views' in both books, are at best, ambivalent about the cutting rituals and at worst, portray cutting as a vehicle to sharper thinking and acceptance into an elite group. I am worried that my children and other children may view cutting as an acceptable way to deal with their issues. Unfortunately, most parents do not have the time to peruse what their children are reading. I feel that a school should be extra responsible in what books they offer and promote to children. Most children think of schools and school personnel as authority entities and figures, respectively, and may not be able to distinguish, with their young, inexperienced, impressionable minds, that the cutting is wrong and possibly even dangerous.

Surveys among college student reveal that 17 percent have self-injured, and experts estimate that 15 percent of the general adolescent population practices self injury. Janis Whitlock, a psychologist with experience in the self-injury field states that the "Internet is spreading the word about self-injury, *prompting many to try it who might not have otherwise known about it.*" The Canadian Mental Health Association states that "...a rising trend for teens to discuss cutting on the Internet and form cutting clubs at school,"¹ exists. I worry that some youth previously not exposed to cutting will begin considering it after reading these books. I know that children may access the book in public libraries and bookstores; however, I believe it important that children not receive the impression that the school endorses the books by including them in its library.

I believe it important that parents be warned in writing by a color leaflet at the beginning of the school year, or adhesive tags on books, to be conscious of what their children are reading. If possible, web links to objective book review sites should be included. I would be happy to help develop the leaflet or tags.

¹Jane E. Brody. "The Growing Wave of Teenage Self-Injury." The New York Times, May 20, 2008, web version.

Below I include specific references to cutting in the books *Pretties* and *Specials*:

Cutting is first mentioned in the "Rituals" chapter of *Pretties* which begins on pages 172. One of the main characters, Shay, forms a new group called the "Cutters". The Cutters' ritual consists of cutting themselves on the arms and is described on pages 174 to 176. Tally, the main protagonist of both *Pretties* and *Specials*, watches as Shay and her group cut themselves. As she watches, she recollects how earlier in the book, when she inadvertently hurt herself and started bleeding, that her "head had really become clear." In the next paragraph, Tally remembers how Shay understood that Tally's injury had eventually led her to the cure (of the state of mind the Pretties live in induced by the operation performed at age sixteen).

Further mention of the Cutters appears at the end of the book on pages 366 to 368. Shay explains to Tally how the Cutters are allowed extra privileges, and are considered "special Specials". Specials are the most powerful humans who police the Pretties and the Ugliers. Their bodies are enhanced with superhuman features. Eventually Tally herself becomes a Cutter and a Special.

In *Specials*, Tally is now also cutting herself. The cutting references in this book occur more often and in more detail than in *Pretties*. On p. 10, Tally reflects "Power came from icy clarity, from knowing exactly what you were, from cutting." Another reference appears on p.27 describing Shay "Her mind was so icy that she'd practically made herself into a Special – brain-wise, anyway, - breaking out of bubbleheadedness with nothing but a sharp knife against her own skin." A different form of self mutilation is mentioned on p. 59 when the Cutters are gathered together in front of a bonfire "All sixteen of them – minus Fausto – were gathered around, daring one another to dash through the flames barefoot..." Another reference to cutting appears on p. 63 when Shay advises Tally "Don't be embarrassed, Tally-wa. No one can be icy all the time. Maybe you just need a cut. Shay drew her knife".

Most of p. 66 is dedicated to cutting, and towards the end Tally is thinking "As the pain pushed through her, Tally felt her mind grow icy for the first time all day. She could see her future now, a clear path with no more reversals or confusions. On p. 83, Tally muses about her friend Zane "...she wished she could explain how the Cutters were different, not like the regular Specials who'd pushed him around when he was an ugly. The Cutters played by their own rules. They'd found everything that Zane had always wanted— living in the wild outside the city dictates, their minds icy, free from the imperfections of ugliness...."

Cutting is described throughout p. 95, 96 and 97; this is one of many quotes: "But Tally squeezed down hard, driving the razor edge into her flesh... The special moment came with its wild clarity, and Tally could finally see through her own tangled thoughts..." On p. 168 "Shay's response was to stare at the stone for a moment, then drop it back into the mud and draw her knife. She began to roll up the arm of her sneak suit. Tally turned away, hoping that once her mind was clear, Shay would understand." It continues a

paragraph later, on p. 169 "A moment later, Tally heard Shay standing up, and turned to face her. Her arm was bleeding, her flash tattoos in dizzying motion, and as she approached, Tally saw the telltale sharpness in her eyes."

The books, particularly *Specials*, are fraught with references to cutting as well as inappropriate references to sixteen year olds drinking (p. 3-4 of *Pretties*), bingeing and purging (p.62-63 of *Pretties*), and living together (p.101-104). On p. 104 in *Pretties*, the narrator mentions that "Zane and Tally skipped breakfast – a meal they hadn't eaten for the last month..."

Please let me know what the outcome of my request is. I thank Ms. McMorris, Antioch Library Media Specialist for her time and patience in explaining the request for reconsideration process to me. I appreciate your efforts in reviewing my request.

Kind regards,

May 6, 2008

PERSONAL HEALTH

The Growing Wave of Teenage Self-Injury

By JANE E. BRODY

"I feel relieved and less anxious after I cut. The emotional pain slowly slips away into the physical pain."

"It's a way to have control over my body because I can't control anything else in my life."

"It expresses emotional pain or feelings that I'm unable to put into words."

"I usually feel like I have a black hole in the pit of my stomach. At least if I feel pain it's better than nothing."

These are some of the reasons young people have given for why they deliberately and repeatedly injure their own bodies, a disturbing and hard-to-treat phenomenon that experts say is increasing among adolescents, college students and young adults.

Experts urge parents, teachers, friends and doctors to be more alert to signs of this behavior and not accept without question often spurious explanations for injuries, like "I cut myself on the countertop," "I fell down the stairs" or "My cat scratched me."

The sooner the behavior is detected and treated, the experts maintain, the more quickly it is likely to end without leaving lasting physical scars.

There are no exact numbers for this largely hidden problem, but anonymous surveys among college students suggest that 17 percent of them have self-injured, and experts estimate that self-injury is practiced by 15 percent of the general adolescent population.

Experts say self-injury is often an emotional response, not a suicidal one, though suicide among self-injurers is a concern.

The Canadian Mental Health Association describes it this way: "Usually they are not trying to end all feeling; they are trying to feel better. They feel pain on the outside, not the inside."

Janis Whitlock, a psychologist who has interviewed about 40 people with histories of self-injury and is participating in an eight-college study of it, says the Internet is spreading the word about self-injury, prompting many to try it who might not otherwise have known about it.

"There is a rising trend for teens to discuss cutting on the Internet and form cutting clubs at school," the Canadian association has stated.

Celebrities, too, have contributed to its higher profile. Among those who have confessed to being self-injurers are the late Princess Diana, Johnny Depp, Angelina Jolie, Nicole Richie, Richie Edwards, Courtney Love and the lead singer on the Garbage band album "Bleed Like Me."

Common self-injuries include carving or cutting the skin, scratching, burning, ripping or pulling skin or hair, pinching, biting, swallowing sublethal doses of toxic substances, head banging, needle sticking and breaking bones. The usual targets are the arms, legs and torso, areas within easy reach and easily hidden by clothing.

Self-injury can become addictive. Experts theorize that it may be reinforced by the release in the brain of opioidlike endorphins that result in a natural high and emotional relief.

Dr. Whitlock, director of the Cornell Research Program on Self-Injurious Behavior in Adolescents and Young Adults, said in an interview that self-injury mainly seemed to function to "self-regulate feelings and help people cope with overwhelming negative emotions they have no other way to dispel."

Self-injury makes some people feel part of a group. Teenagers who self-injure often report that there is no adult they could talk to who accepts them for who they are.

"A 13-year-old can go on the Internet and instantly find community and get hitched to this behavior," Dr. Whitlock said. "When they don't want to self-injure anymore, it means they have to leave a community."

Self-injury can be manipulative, an effort to make others care or feel guilty or to drive them away. More often, though, it is secretive. Self-injurers may try to hide wounds under long pants and long sleeves even in hot weather, and may avoid activities like swimming.

Who Is Vulnerable?

Self-injury often starts in the emotional turmoil of the preteen and early teenage years and may persist well into adulthood.

Although female self-injurers are more likely to be seen by a professional, in-depth studies indicate that the behavior is practiced equally by young men and women. No racial or socioeconomic group has been found to be more vulnerable, although self-injury is slightly less common among Asians and Asian-Americans, Dr. Whitlock said.

Interviews with self-injurers have found background factors that may prompt and perpetuate the behavior. A history of childhood sexual, and especially emotional, abuse has been reported by half or more of self-injurers. Some seek relief from the resulting emotional pain. Others self-inflict pain to punish themselves for what they perceive as their role in inviting the abuse.

Low self-esteem is common among self-injurers. Childhood neglect, social isolation and unstable living conditions have also been cited as risk factors. In about 25 percent of self-injurers, there is a history of eating disorders, as well as an overlap with risky drinking and unsafe sex.

The families of self-injurers commonly suppress unpleasant emotions. Children grow up not knowing how to express and deal with anger and sadness, instead turning emotional pain on themselves. Depression, for example, is often described as anger turned inward.

Although 60 percent of self-injurers have never had suicidal thoughts, self-injury can be a harbinger of suicidal behavior. It can also accidentally result in suicide.

"Those who self-injure should be evaluated for suicidal potential," Dr. Whitlock said. There is some evidence that self-injury is more common among those with family histories of suicide. And some self-injurers suffer from chronic yet treatable emotional problems like depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder or obsessive-compulsive disorder.

Self-injury can be set off by certain events like being rejected by someone important, feeling wronged or being blamed for something over which the person had no control.

Treatment

Although there are no specific medications to treat self-injury, drugs that treat underlying emotional problems like depression and anxiety can help. Most effective in general is a form of cognitive behavioral therapy called dialectical behavior therapy. People learn skills that help them better tolerate stress, regulate their emotions and improve their relationships.

The therapy also helps them see themselves not as victims, but as powerful agents, Dr. Whitlock said.

In addition, self-injurers can learn more wholesome ways to relieve stress like practicing meditation or yoga, engaging in vigorous physical activity or reaching out to a friend.

Some self-injurers have noted that they can sometimes avoid the behavior, Dr. Whitlock said, simply by doing something else for several minutes when the urge arises.

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FILE: IIAC-R
CRITICAL

INSTRUCTIONAL MEDIA CENTERS/SCHOOL LIBRARIES

(Selection and Reconsideration of Materials)

The district will obtain materials for the district's media centers and libraries that are current, address the curriculum needs of district instructors and provide the learning resources needed by district students. District librarians, teachers and administrators are responsible for the selection and reconsideration of materials for the district's media centers and school libraries in accordance with the objectives listed in this regulation. Suggestions for the selection and reconsideration of materials will be reviewed at least annually. The superintendent or designee will adopt procedures as needed to accomplish the goals of this regulation.

Objectives for the Selection of Library Materials

Library materials will be selected in accordance with the following objectives:

1. Provide materials that will enrich and support the curriculum, taking into consideration the varied interests, abilities and maturity levels of the pupils served.
2. Provide materials that will stimulate growth in factual knowledge, literary appreciation, aesthetic values and ethical standards.